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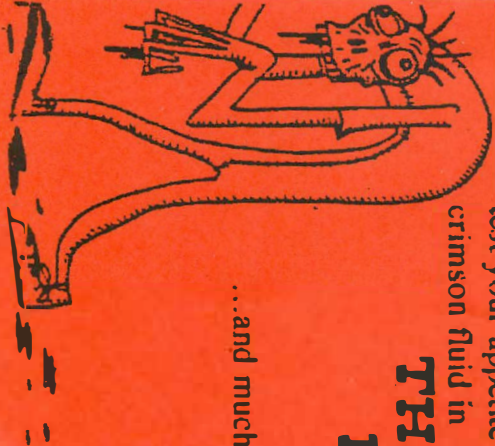
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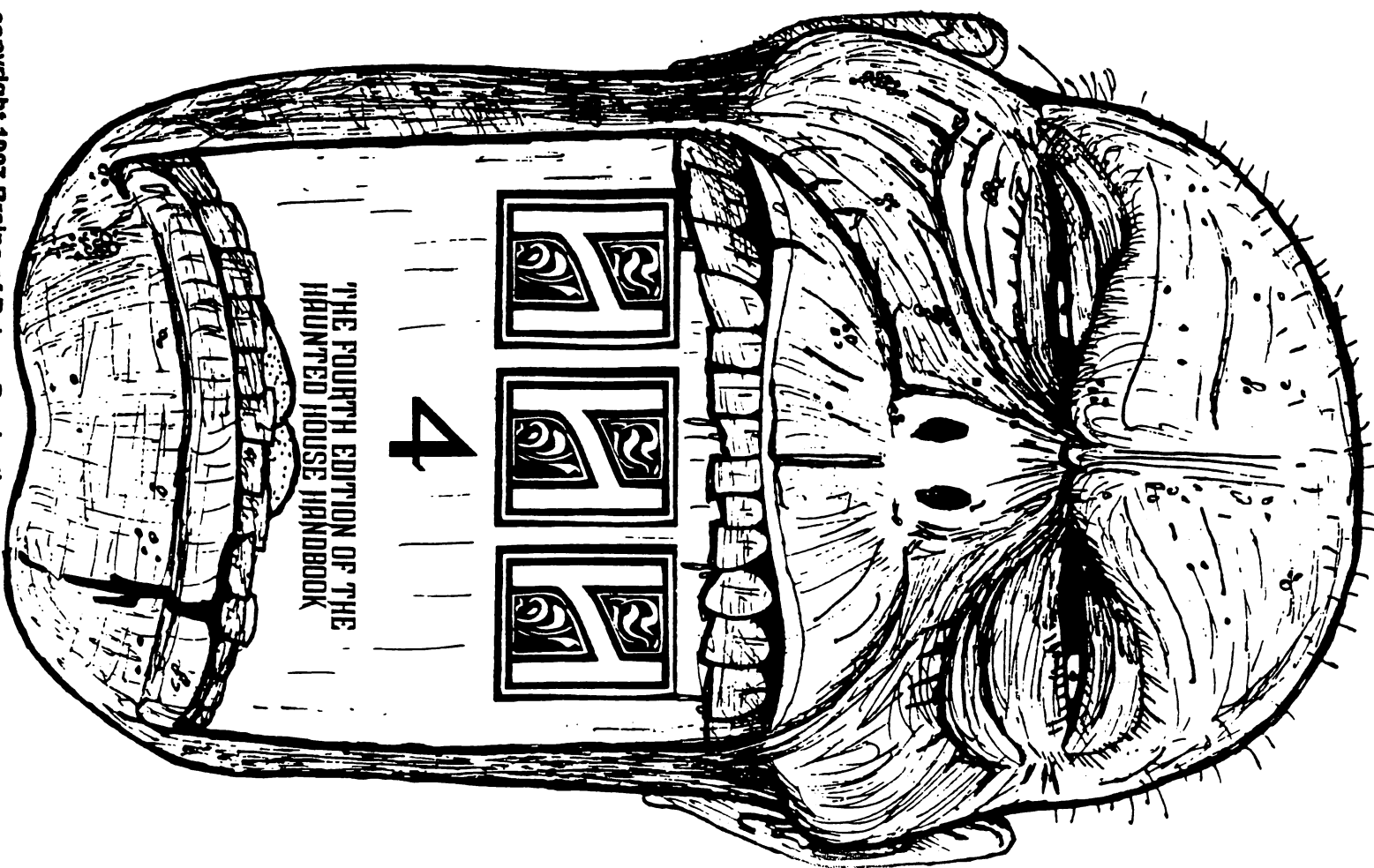
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THE FOURTH EDITION
OF THE
HAUNTED HOUSE HANDBOOK

by Shawne Baines







BRAINS OF BRAINES

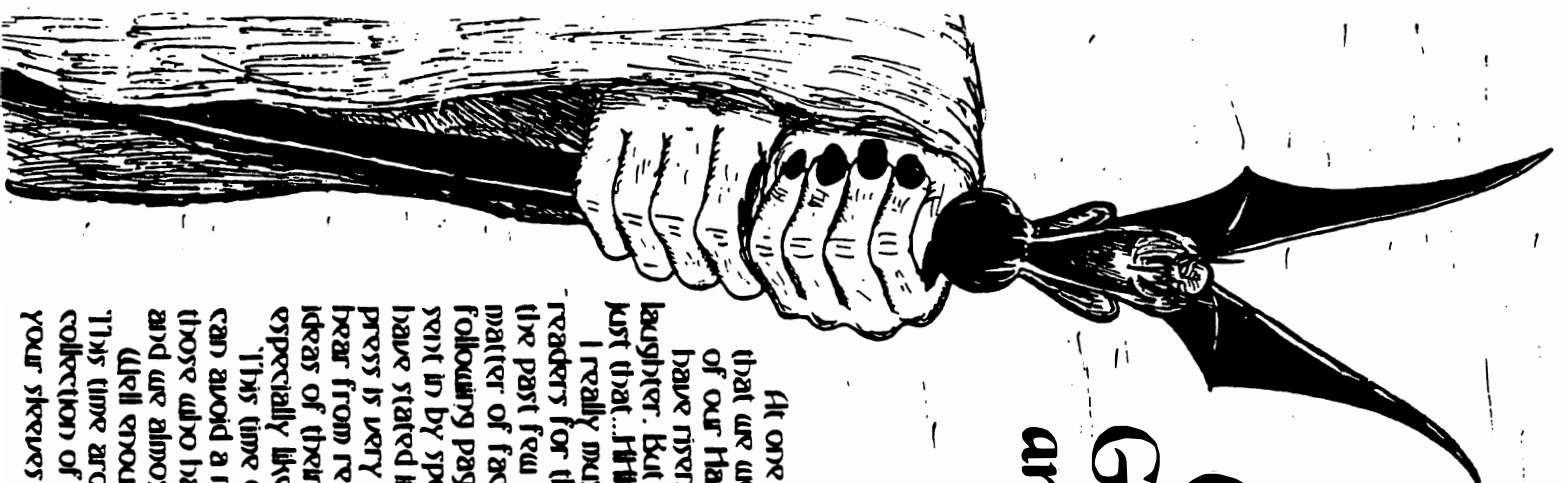
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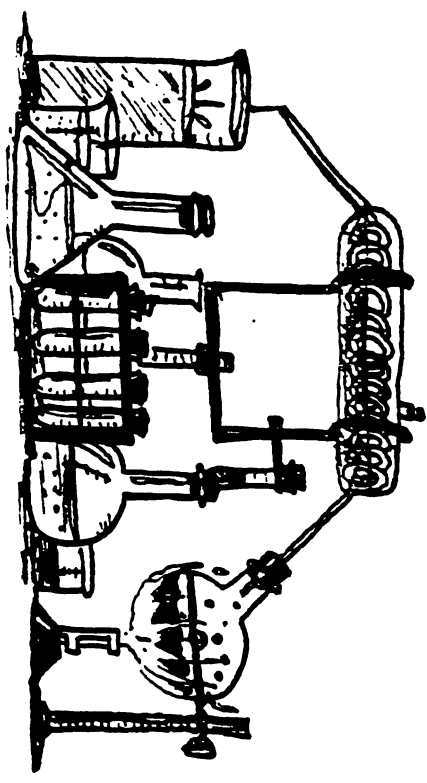
Greetings Ghouls, Goblins, and the Undead...



At one point in time, if someone had told me that we would ever actually see a fourth edition of our Haunted House Handbook, I would easily have risen to the occasion with maniacal laughter. But here we are - four years later - with just that... **HIT!**

I really must take this opportunity to thank my readers for the support that they have offered over the past few years. It has been invaluable. As a matter of fact, a good portion of the materials in the following pages are variations on ideas that were sent in by spooksters from all over the world. As I have stated in previous editions, the brains of *Esau's* press is very small. It is gratifying and flattering to hear from readers who have used our ideas or have ideas of their own. We here at *Brains of Esau's* especially like the photos.

This time out, we are publishing early so that we can avoid a near catastrophe at publication time. For those who have read past editions, you know that we are almost did not get *HIT!* out on time. Well enough about the past. Let's look forward. This time around, I think we have an exciting collection of approaches and effects. So roll up your sleeves and let's get to work...



In Gloging...

So that's it...HHH4! There's enough stuff in those pages to keep you busy for a while. I must thank some of my more active contributors for the ideas and approaches they shared with me. You know who you are. This year I promised an early enough release to make sure you would get a chance to wear these pages out before Halloween rolled around. Well, I've kept my end of the bargain. It's up to you to do yours...

SCARE THE HELL OUT OF THEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

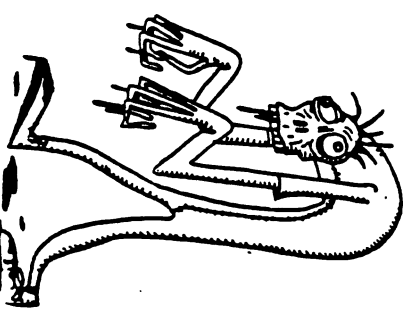
It is your duty! House Haunting is on the rise across North America and you should do your part to help the business grow.

Until next time, and as always...

Happy Haunting.

Shawne Baines

Shawne Baines



tiptoes forward-just in front of your guests- and steps on the pad, activating a bright singular strobe in front of him. He roars and claws at them, and they,naturally, run like idiots.

In order for the executioner to activate the other strobe lights, he will need a switch of some kind and a four-way extension and an extention cord. I was pressed for time when I constructed this set. So instead of wiring a switch that my actor could use, I purchased an Rf remote control from Radio Shack. It was several years ago and I no longer have the associated literature, but these devices are easy to find and can be used in many different ways in a haunted house.

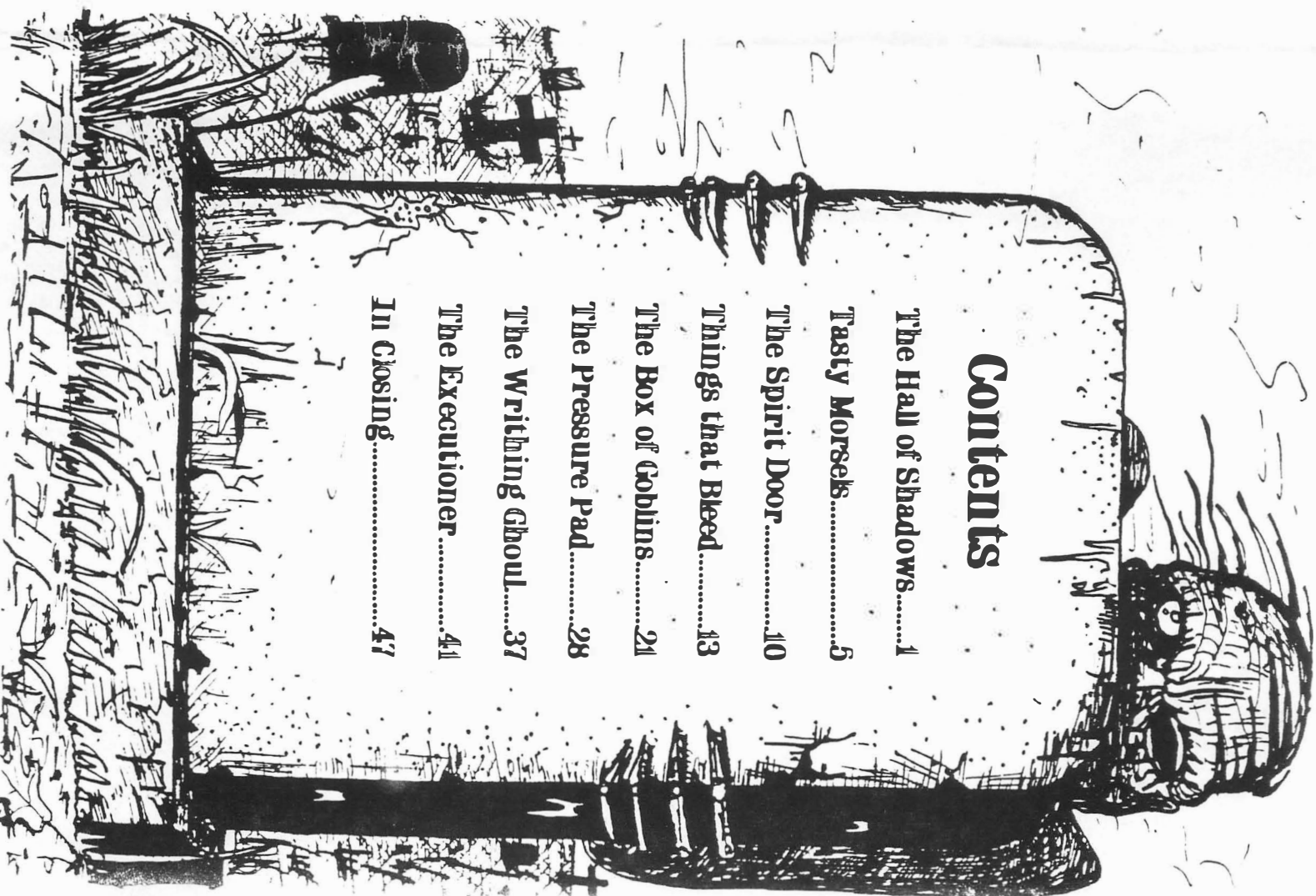
The remote unit consists of a battery operated, handheld remote control and a module that plugs into a wall receptacle. When the remote is activated, the display which is plugged into the module comes to life.

Costumes complete the effect of the Execution Chamber. Your convict should have on gory makeup and be wearing coveralls. The executioner can either wear police-style clothes(available at your local costume rental shop) or a dark monk-style robe.

For sound effects, I created my own using my home computer, which is equipped with a sound board and the related software. If you don't have this technology at your disposal, just look through some of your favorite movies and 'borrow' some of the sounds, recording them to cassette. You can get a good static hum by adjusting a television set so that it is just barely off channel...

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Next, we must construct a lever with which the executioner will "activate" the chair. It is a phoney lever and really does nothing at all. Take a look at **Figure 3.**

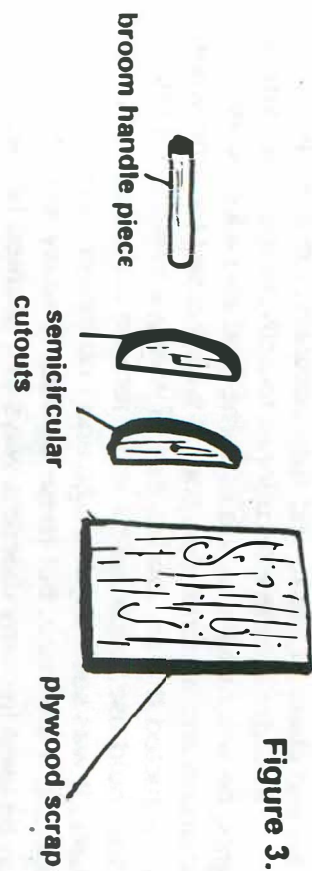


Figure 3.

This prop will be attached to the wall by wood screws or the like, and it will be manned by the executioner himself. The major portion of this chamber's preparation is the setup of the lights. Figure 4 shows an overhead view of the entire room. Use it for a basic reference for the placement of the set pieces and especially the strobe lights.

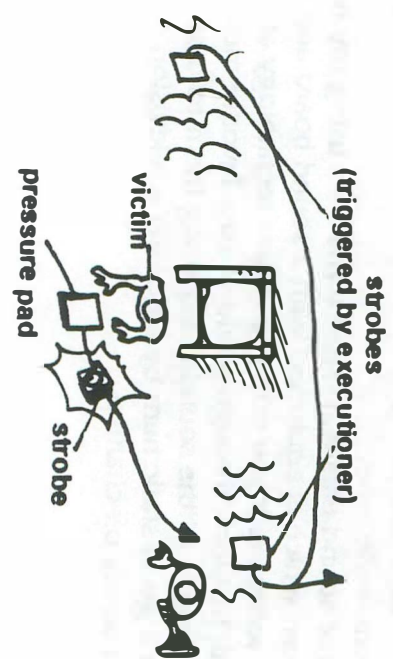


Figure 4.

As you can see, the entire set is illuminated by strobes which are all wired to be activated together. The only exception is the pressure pad unit in front of the chair. When the other lights stop their flashing (controlled by the executioner or someone behind the scenes). The convict

First of all, you're going to need a chair. Duhh. Of course, it may not be quite as simple as that. I was lucky enough to find a parson's chair. It was for sale at a church sale when one of the churches was moving into a new building and was refurbishing its sanctuary. It was a chair rectangular chair with and astonishingly high back. Because of its sheer size it was perfect for the transformation. Okay. So I was lucky. One doesn't come across a find like that one every day. Don't fret, though. If you can not find a chair that strikes your fancy, you can modify one that you already own. You just want to make sure that the chair demands respect from all of those who view it. It should be stiff and uncomfortable, and should have a very high back. An ordinary wooden chair can be transformed by adding wooden armrests and a rectangular panel of plywood as shown in **Figure 2**.

Once the chair

has been found or created, you can turn it into a fake electric chair with a few modifications as shown in the figure. Also,

as you can see, you can

create the illusion of a wood scraps attached chair of death by adding (to enhance chair)

a few disguised household items. It really makes a difference, especially in the

dark. As always, you will

leave a little to the imagination of your guests. To make

the chair appear even larger and threatening, you can put it

on a case or platform to lift it slightly higher than the floor. A

wooden cargo pallet works well, and should be readily

avallale from your local warehouse, grocer, or truck driver.

I'll leave you to that one. As a spookster, you should be able to come up with a piece of furniture that fits the bill.

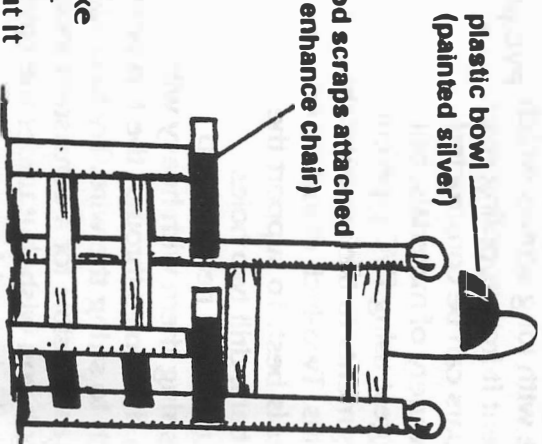
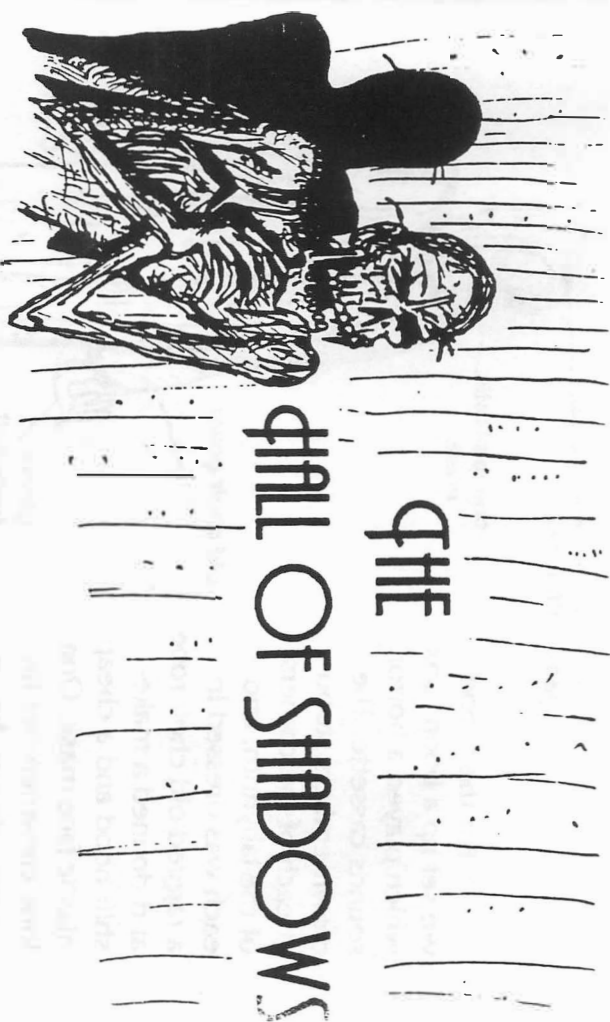


Figure 2.

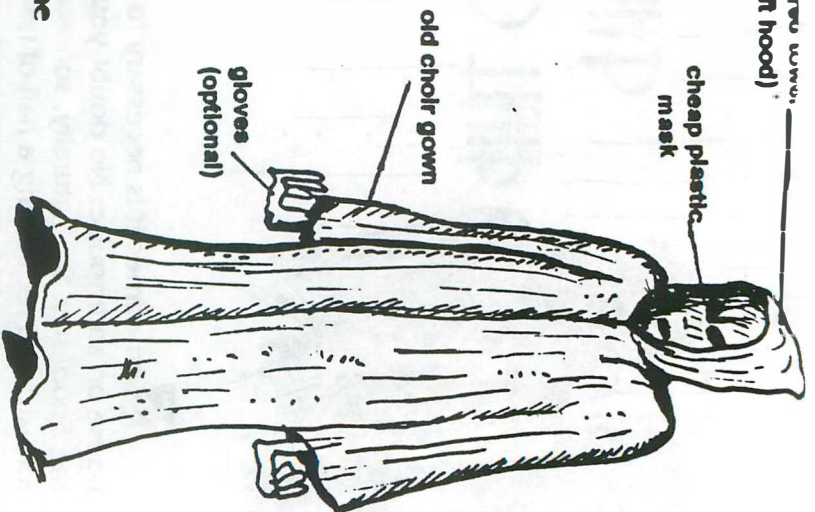


Sometimes it is necessary to put together a haunted house on an impulse. No doubt you are known by others as the *Spookster*. So, naturally, someone will always be coming forward and requesting a hall of horrors at the last minute. By now you should have assembled an effective haunting kit, so throwing together a haunted house on a whim should not be a real nail-biter.

I included this section in **HHHH** perhaps because I was in a reminiscent mood at the time. Actually, my first haunted house was called the *Hall of Shadows* and was constructed in an old tobacco packhouse in three hours the night before a Halloween party. My crew and I had little to utilize except for tattered burlap sheeting, a box of discarded brown choir gowns, and a rapidly approaching deadline.

This, you may notice, is a throwback to the original **HHH**. As can be seen in **Figure 1**, we secured the burlap sheets to the rafters of the room we were haunting to create a zig-zag passage. Although our terror tour was at night, the moon was full. We took special precautions to cover any and all opening through which the outside light could invade. So when our guests entered, it was impossible for their eyes to adjust to the darkness. The stage was set.

For the mood, we set up a boom box which played a horror sounds cassette. The crewmembers stood at each of the corners of the labyrinth, and each was dressed in a ragged old choir robe and donned a makeshift hood and a cheap plastic shift hood and a cheap plastic face mask. One lone crewmember lay on the table in the last 'room.'



I designated myself the tour guide and as my only tool to fend off the darkness, I carried a flashlight which, of course, had been wrapped tightly with electrician's tape. Only a needle-thin sliver of light crept forth.

Here is how the corridor worked, as if you have not guessed *already*:

The guests awaited entry at the wooden door, not really knowing what to expect. We lucked out, like I said, because we had a full moon, which really added to the mood. Through the walls of the decrepit structure, they could hear the strangely muffled screams and warbled noises from the sound effects tape.

I slowly-very slowly- opened the door with a long, strained creak and stood glaring at the group through the eyes of a distorted *Mardi Gras*-like skull mask, which was obscured by the hood I wore.

'Two,' I said in a disguised, demonic voice. Because the size of the group of people was limited, I figured that the smaller each tour was, the better. As each pair of visitors followed me through the venture into darkness, they held one another tightly like lost babes in the woods.

Not an experience that many would soon forget! We have now graduated to the mother of all chambers, the execution chamber. To pull this one off successfully will take a bit of effort, but it is well worth it!

We'll start with the simple stuff first, then work our way up. Of course I refer to the barred cells that mark the entrance to the chamber.

To create the occupied cells which will usher your guests into the final chamber, we will construct wall frames to support an array of hanging 'bars'. Take a look at Figure 1.

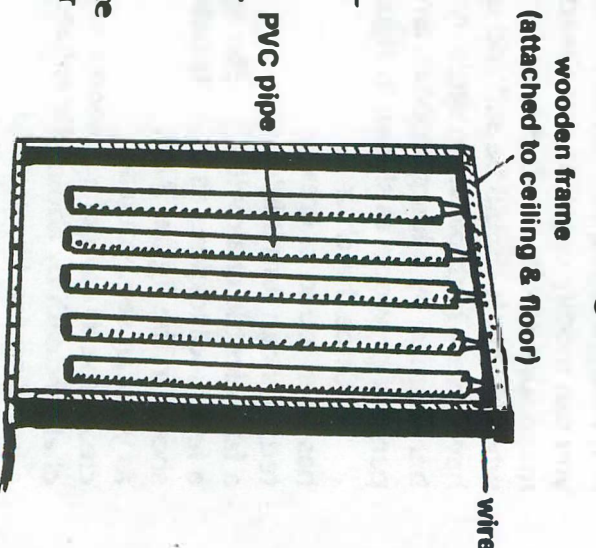


Figure 1.

As you see, this frame is very similar to the ones we have constructed in the past. The differences are obvious. Because of the weight of the phoney bars which will be suspended from its top, I suggest securing the panel into place with long screws which prevent it from toppling over. The bars can be constructed of a variety of materials, but I suggest using PVC pipe cut in segments to the appropriate lengths. Two-inch diameter or larger is best. To support the fake bars, drill two holes through them near the top and string them with heavy wire. Then drill holes through the top board in the frame through which to string the wire. Try to center the hanging pipes as well as possible for a consistent look. You can paint the bars silver if you wish, but under the cover of darkness I really don't think that it's necessary.

All right. Step one is complete. Using the phoney cells is pretty much self-explanatory. If you don't have the time or resources to complete the rest of the project, don't sweat it. These cages are quite effective at any point in your hall of horrors. They always seem to work. But for those of you who are not wimps, let's get on with it.

You are shivering in fear and anticipation. The last display in this house really set you on edge and you know that the worst is yet to come. As you turn the corner, you find that the walls are no longer solid and are instead made of bars of what appear to be metal. Beyond them on both sides is darkness. You speed up the pace, because you can sense that there is someone or something contained in the cages to your left and right.

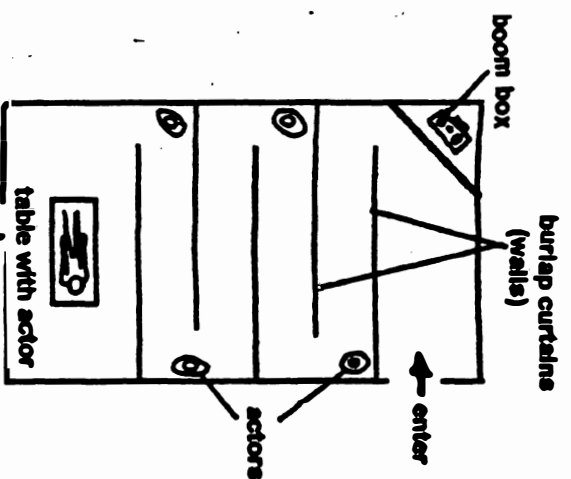
There is movement and something dark and creepy groans and reaches out from the bars to your left. As you back away from them, another form reaches out from your right. For a fleeting second-as you hurry by the cages-you see that the bars are loose and the things may escape into the relative safety of the hallway. Damn. You really should have listened to the others and gone to the restroom before you entered this terrifying place.

Once you have made it by the threat of the loose bars of the cells in the hallway, you find yourself in a dimly lit room. Once your eyes adjust, you see that there is a figure slumped over in a chair in its center and another shadowy form is standing behind it and to its right. But this is no ordinary chair. It is wired with electrodes and coils. And the figure to the rear is manning a large lever that is mounted on the wall. Suddenly, a forceful and demanding voice fills the air around you.

"Because of your crimes against humanity and nature, you have been sentenced to death by the state," it says. With that, the figure to the rear of the chamber pulls the lever forcefully downward and the room is filled by the crackle of electricity and the flash of blinding lights. The man in the chair does a strange and convulsive dance, held in place by the straps at his wrists. After a moment or two, everything goes completely dark and all that can be heard is a slow, unnerving hum.

The intense flashing lights have disoriented you and for a second you try to piece together in your mind exactly what it was that you just experienced. Before you can, though, there is another outburst of flashing light. There is a man standing in front of you, screaming and lurching out at you. It is the convicted criminal... HE HAS ESCAPED!!!

You do what anyone else in his right mind would do...you run like hell...



At each turn in the maze stood one of my helpers, and the guests had to walk unneringly close to them as we made our way along. Each of the goblins breathed heavily and loudly as we passed them, but stood like demons waiting to pounce. Once we had passed them by, each one of them fell in line behind us and followed just out of arm's reach- so their presense was felt.

Even though I was in disguise, the spectators crowded me in terror. At a couple of points in the short maze, one of the trailing phantoms would scream or reach out and touch the more easily frightened of the visitors. At other points in the tour, I would freeze in my tracks for a few questionable moments, then walk forward at a more rapid pace. This drove them crazy!

The *Hall of Shadows* had a final chamber, as all good haunted houses do. In this makeshift 'room,' was a slab which was created simply by covering an old table with some of the same ragged sheets which had formed the walls. On the table lay one of the denizens of evil, lifeless and silent. The spectators hesitated when they entered the opening, but were forced to move forward as all of the trailing helpers pushed through from behind and formed a ring around the table.

As if on queue, the shadowy group began to chant in unintelligible, discordant voices and I took a position at the end of the table, opposite from the shivering spectators. I announced to all that one of our 'secret society' had died and gone to hell. This night marking the anniversary of his death, we would summon all of our powers to pull back the spirit of this sinner from the grasp of the demons below-to bring life back into his rotten body.

I held my hands over the sprawled actor and the other ghouls followed suit. Then, while the droning chants of the others intensified, I yelled a command in some phoney,

unknown tongue. The actor on the table twitched suddenly and writhed for a moment or two.

"No!" I yelled and I, as well as my hoard of ghoulis, backed away from the table. I screamed that this was some sinister demon spirit- not the one who we were trying to resurrect. At this point, the dead thing suddenly sat up, bellowing loudly and clawing and groping the air between him and the spectators. The actor nearest the exit opened the door, and the pair of terrified victims fled the hall of horrors.

Simple but effective, eh?

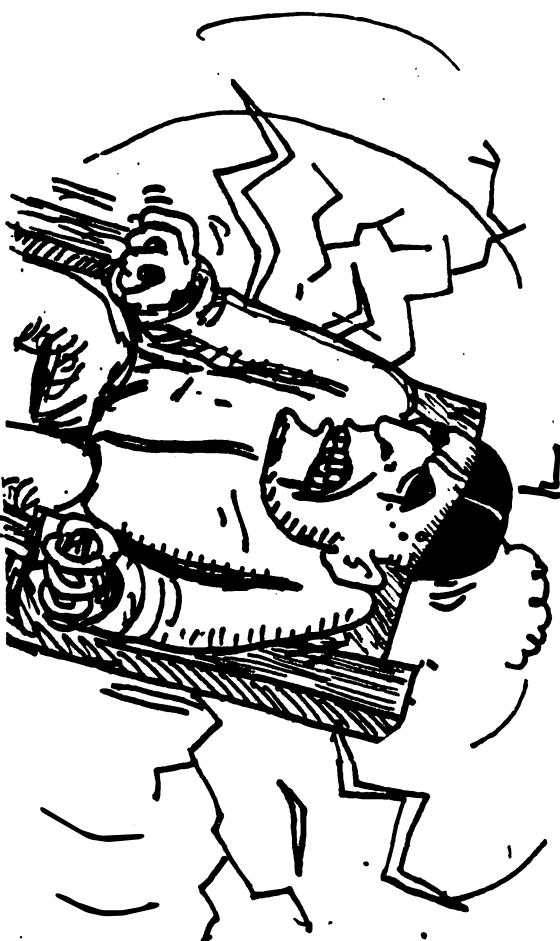
My main reason for including this anecdote in this edition is that I wanted to demonstrate one of the most important themes that I have tried to stress over the years. *Less is more.* Props and special effects are great, but the most powerful tool you possess in your haunting kit is the light switch and your imagination. Darkness is supreme. The unknown is much more frightening than anything you or I can build. My *Hall of Shadows* was not even equipped with a strobe light, but the people who took the tour that night still mention it to me- *and that was over ten years ago!*

When you have a situation on hand where it is necessary to put together a haunted attraction in a hurry, don't sweat it. What voids between the entrance to your tour and the tense climax, where you do not have the time or the resources to develop something spectacular, just *use your imagination.*

And more importantly, use your guests' imaginations...

the

EXECUTIONER



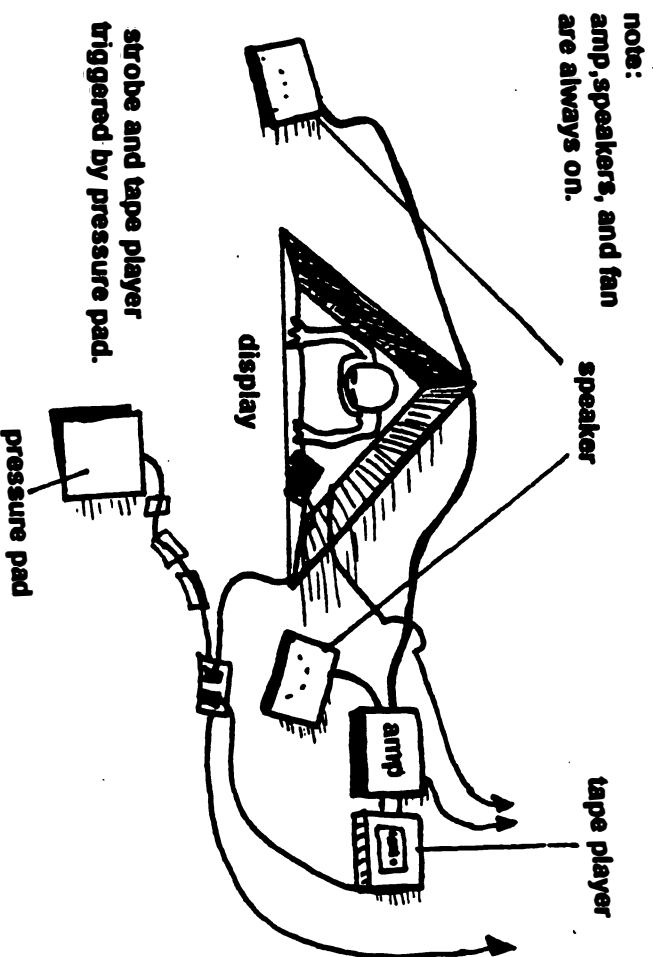
One of the most terrifying rooms that I have included in my horror tour is a death chamber. It seems to work quite well because of a combination of things that frighten people. The convicted person is pretty scary, of course. Then there's the whole underlying concept of death, violent and otherwise.

There is certainly a wide range of approaches you can take in creating this room, the last in your tour. Many take the more gothic approach, faking a beheading or the sort. If your hall of horrors is based on a more medieval theme, this may be the approach for you. I however, tend to go with something a little more contemporary. I guess by now you know that I have a special relationship with electricity.

Naturally, the electric chair is my favorite piece of furniture. So it was a natural choice in creating my own death chamber.

Before we get into the actual putting together of the room and what lies before it, let's take the tour through the eyes of one of your guests...

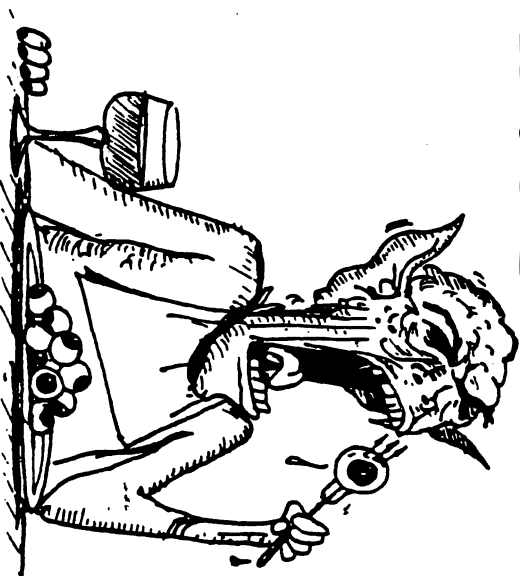
Figure 3.



strobe and tape player triggered by pressure pad.

Okay, you're set! As your guests awkwardly stumble down the dark corridor, one of them steps onto the pressure pad unit. Without warning, blinding light flashes and a scream is heard. There...in the corner...*is the ghoul*, squirming and grasping the thin air ahead of him, begging for just one taste of rotten flesh...

TASTY MORSELS



A good haunted house requires shockers and surprises. The proprietor of such an unusual attraction-*that's you*-should always be thinking one step ahead of the guests. You have to keep the upper hand by timing your effects and displays to continuously keep your visitors on their toes.

I have made several references to this concept in previous editions of the *Haunted House Handbook*. Do you remember the *Wet Web* in the original *HHB*? I also presented this concept in *HHB2* with *The Unseen Hand*.

The simple fact is, your guests will be consumed by darkness as they enter your attraction. Think about what you do when you are in a dark place and are trying to plow your way forward. Your eyes are almost dry from trying to hold them open as much as possible. Because you do not know what to expect, you glare uselessly forward and your attention is focused at eye level.

Hal Oh, boy- *could I starde you at that point!* Don't be ashamed. You are just a victim of human nature.

If you constructed the *Spider's Lair* as outlined in *HHB2*, you know that the most shocking part of the effect was when the victim stood up after exiting the box and found himself face-to-face with a groping, screaming goblin. Think about it. For that one fleeting second, he was relieved to be able to stand upright once again and you, the *Spookster*, exploited this illusion of confidence.

All of your effects should be timed in this fashion. If something is going to spring out at your guests, it should do so when they are least expecting it. Remember *The Lab* in 19813?

At the risk of sounding redundant, let's consider this concept in an even more practical fashion.

If you have what seem to be long pauses between action or displays in your hall of horrors, maybe you should try this little experiment:

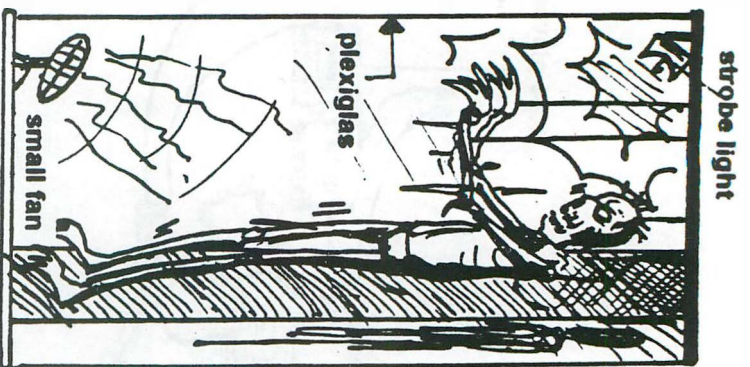
Turn out all of the lights and stumble through your corridors. Take special note of where your attention is focused as you pass through. Clear your mind and think about it. You will find that your attention is usually trained on one of two places. Depending on where you are at the moment, you will either be looking forward or looking downward to make sure you have sure footing.

I bet you never really thought about it before. But now that you have, it is easy to seriously consider the best locations for shockers. If creatures of any kind are going to frighten your guests, they must be located in positions that are strategically opposite from where your guest's attention is focused. This means that at the places where you found yourself looking downward, something should reach out at them from the top. At the places where you found yourself looking forward, something should scream from behind.

The fact is, there should be *things of the creepy kind* reaching out from ~~all directions~~ in your haunted house, and each time this disturbance occurs, it should be coming from a direction that successfully exploits the vulnerabilities of your visitors. Let's take a look at some alternatives that you possess in the house haunting business.

Things from above

There are a number of ways that you can frighten your guests from above eye level. Perhaps the simplest is shown in *Figure 1*. As you can see, this "high tech device" is merely an object hung from a string at the end of a pole which is extended overhead. Gosh. It looks quite a bit like a fishing pole, doesn't it? One of your crewmembers simply has to stand out of sight and lower the creepy-crawly down on your guests.



Install your ghoul in the cabinet as shown and position the small electric fan so that it creates the most movement. You want the ghoul to quiver, so it will take a little bit of experimentation. plug the fan into a receptacle or extension cord so that it is always on. If it is plugged into the pressure pad unit, it will be ineffective due to the amount of time that it will take for it to attain operating speed when activated.

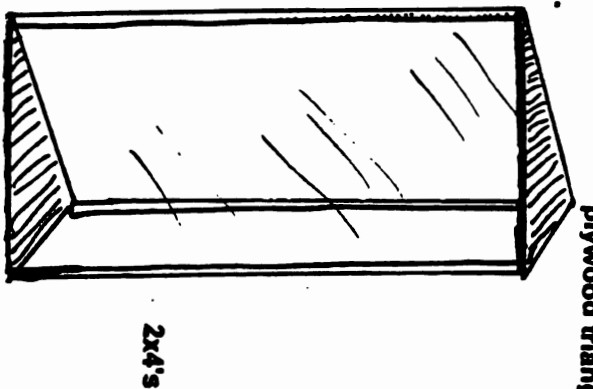
The strobe light, on the other hand, will be plugged into the receptacle on the pressure pad trigger. Also, your sound effect will be triggered along with it.

I suggest that you mount the strobe light at a sharp angle, either very high in the display case or very low. Either approach will give a creepy, shadowy effect when the display is triggered.

Far out. Now all your display needs is a good sound effect. I suggest that you sit down with a tape recorder and make a cassette which contains short, though unnerving groans or screams. As monotonous as it may be, you need to create a long cassette on which this scream is heard over and over again. That way, every time someone steps on the pressure plate a separate scream or moan will be heard.

Mount your speakers or tape player in an inconspicuous and safe place, and plug the tape player into the other receptacle on the pressure pad unit. Because it sometimes takes a tape unit a second or two to warm up and produce sound, it is best to plug just the tape player itself into this outlet and run its audio outputs into an amplifier which is on all of the time. (See *Figure 3*)

Figure 1. plywood triangle

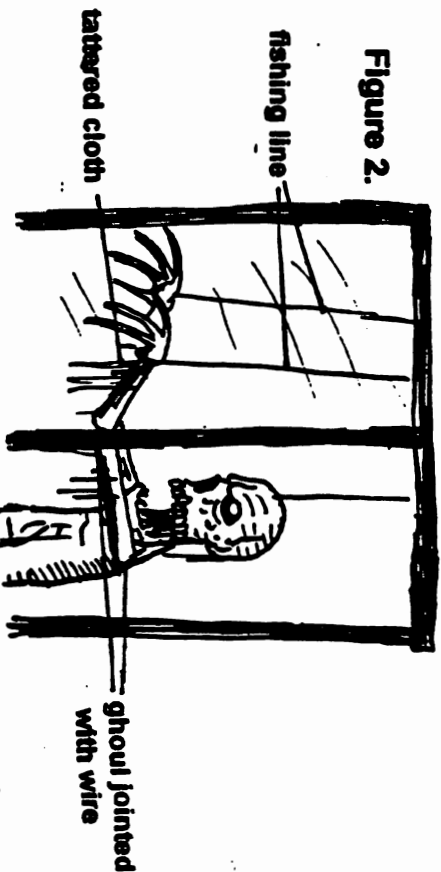


I would suggest building a corner cabinet for your ghou, similar to the one shown in Figure 1. As you can see, the cabinet is triangular in shape and its face is made of plexiglas. The rear panels or at least one of them is removable or can be altogether eliminated. This will allow placement of the props within the cabinet, as well as any modifications that may be needed.

Your fake ghoul should be suspended from the top of the cabinet by strong fishing line, so that he hangs freely. It would be best to use a lightweight corpse on this project, because he will be animated by the flow of air. Also, he should be jointed (also with fishing line) so that he can fall in the air current, which is supplied by a small electric fan.

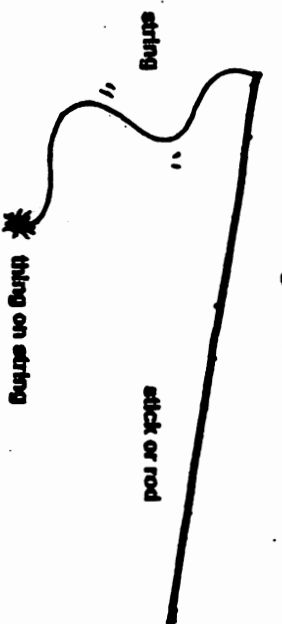
Depending on the dimensions of the display cabinet, which will be completely dependent on the restrictions of the area in which it is installed, you may even want to suspend

Figure 2.



the ends of the dummy's arms so that he appears to be reaching out at your guests (See Figure 2.)

Figure 1.



What should you hang at the end of the string? Heck, I guess about the simplest thing that you can put together is a yarn fuzzy. Just be sure to use black yarn. In case you don't know what a yarn fuzzy is - I say this with a certain amount of incredulity - take a look at Figure 2.

To make the fuzzy,

simply wind a fair amount of yarn in a loop and tie it in the middle as shown. Then cut the ends of the loops to create a thing that vaguely resembles a pom-pom. Sorry, I didn't mean to conjure up the disgusting image of cheerleaders.

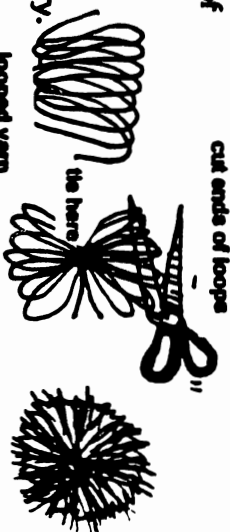
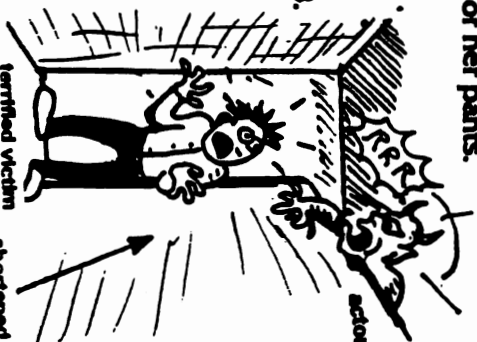


Figure 2.

The crewmember who mans this station should use his own discretion when it comes to administering this effect. Who knows - a little brush on the cheek or the top of one of your guests' head? Believe me, this effect costs less than a dollar and it will make some of your guests have to fight the urge to wet his or her pants.

Figure 3.



If you have a taste for the more complex, here is an effect for you. We talked about the construction of wall partitions at least twice in the HALL collection. If you build one of these fake walls, you may want to make a portion short enough for a crewmember to grope out at your visitors from above (See Figure 3)

The Unseen Hand in HHHH2

was, as I said, a good example of an effect that is startling from below. If you want this fright to be even more impressive to your guests, you can use some of the same pipe insulators that we used before. This time, however, instead of securing these filmsey pipes to the wall, cut small peep-holes at the base of your wall partitions (Figure 4) and have crewmembers prod and poke at your victims' ankles. It's a scream! And I mean that quite *literally*.

Last but not least—and I am still debating its mention in this edition—is the descending bug idea. I guess that I decided to include this effect just because of the number of letters I received from readers regarding it. This is the oldest effect in the book, but so many people seemed to be thrilled by it that I thought it was in my best interest to include it and get it behind me.

Who knows? Perhaps some of you have never heard of it. The descending bug idea is a fairly simple one. It merely consists of a bag full of rubber insects, a spool of monofilament fishing line, a handful of eye hooks, and a door. See Figure 5.



Figure 4.

pee puddle
(from previous tour)

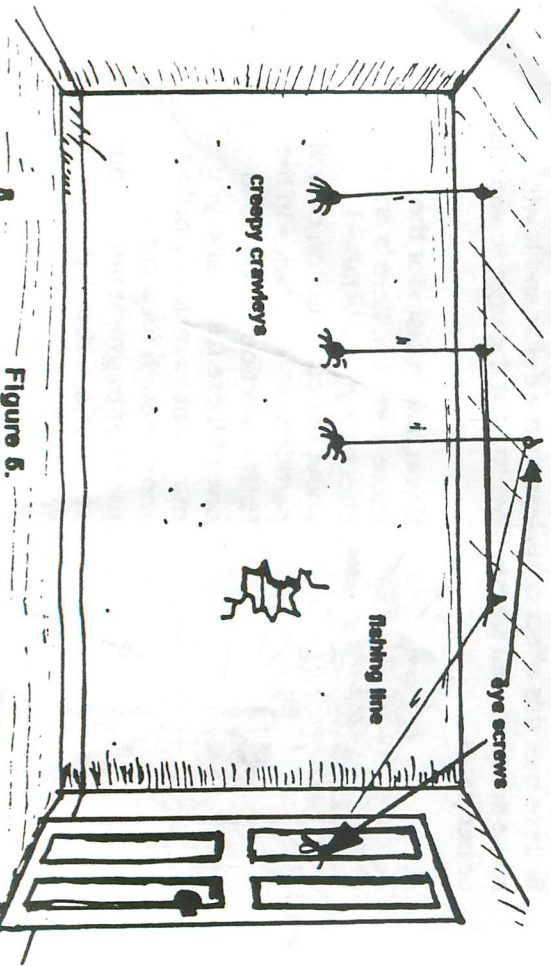


Figure 5.



In the last section, we discussed the construction of a pressure plate that could be used to automate a display in your haunted house. One of the most effective ways to utilize this device, as I stated, was to trigger a strobe light with it. A good display for terrifying your visitors is a ghoul which moves and groans at the right time, illuminated by a strobe.

There are many ways you can construct your fake ghoul. We have outlined these principles many times in the past. So to eliminate redundancy, we'll forego the descriptions of those steps this time around. Instead, we will talk about a few new ways that you can use your homemade dummies.

I have found that some of the more cocky visitors to your labyrinth may sometimes - to show others their 'cool'-mutilate the displays in your haunted house. To avoid such a catastrophe, I suggest constructing a display unit to protect your malshapen construction.

To install the unit in your haunted house, I would carefully plan the effect that will utilize it. Whatever display will startle your visitors should be strategically placed to move them forward and away from the pressure pad unit. You do not want to have something flash in front of them and force them to move backwards across the plate. It could trip them due to its high end. Instead place all of your shocking displays to the side and behind them.

Secure the wires of your unit- as well as the unit itself- to the floor using gaffer's tape(duct tape). It will prevent another tripping hazard for your guests, as well as keep the unit from shifting under their feet.

The many applications of the pressure pad unit are limited only by your imagination. It works great with strobe lights and tape players. Just be sure that any tape player does not hesitate in starting when power is supplied.

If you're having a hard time coming up with ideas, just turn on to the next section, where we will play with a few unique ideas...

As you can see, this is a simple but effective device. When the door to the room is open and the guests enter, the insects that are tied to the end of the fishing line are lifted up out of sight and touch. When the door is closed, however, and your visitors are plunged into darkness, the creatures that are tied above descend into their hair. This is a great effect and I am ashamed that I have not mentioned it before. But even I can't think of everything...

THE SPIRIT DOOR

This idea was sent to me by Jason Simpson from San Jose, CA. At first I was skeptical, but once I tried it, I liked it.

The spirit door is a simple special effect that really evokes a supernatural undertone in your haunted house. Basically it is a door that appears like any other door, but as your guests file by, a creature from the *Great Beyond* pushes forward through it, causing the door to swell outward in the shape of a creepy face and groping fingertips. I like this effect because of its sheer simplicity.

To create this stunning effect requires a little bit of patience, but it is well worth the effort. First of all, you need to select an open doorway in your labyrinth and measure its inside dimensions. Then, using one inch by four inch (1x4) slats of wood, construct an inner frame to fit the opening as shown in Figure 1. I prefer to use 1 1/4" drywall screws to hold the frame together. Using nails tends to make the frame rickety and the thin boards are more likely to split.

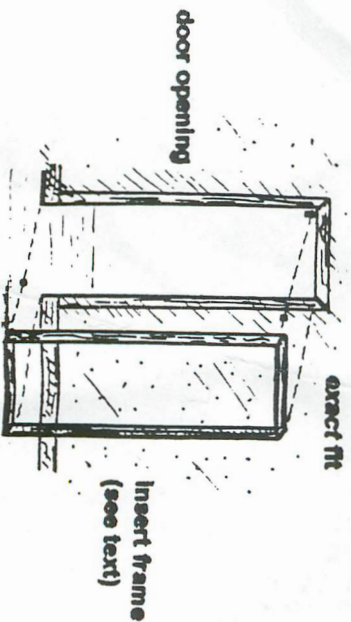


Figure 1.

Once the frame is complete, check to make sure that it fits in the door opening. If your measurements were correct, it should fit like a glove.

We're in the home stretch now, so don't get impatient. We need to install the switch into the pressure pad unit. To do so, measure the height of the switch as shown in Figure 9. You will want to create a bracket, of sorts, as is shown. This will hold the switch in place for activation and protect it from being crushed or broken. The blocks in this part of the project should be just tall enough to hold the switch above where its wires will not come disconnected as people step on the unit. You will need to drill a hold through the top panel through which you can install the switch, then secure it in place with the nut and washer that should have come with it.

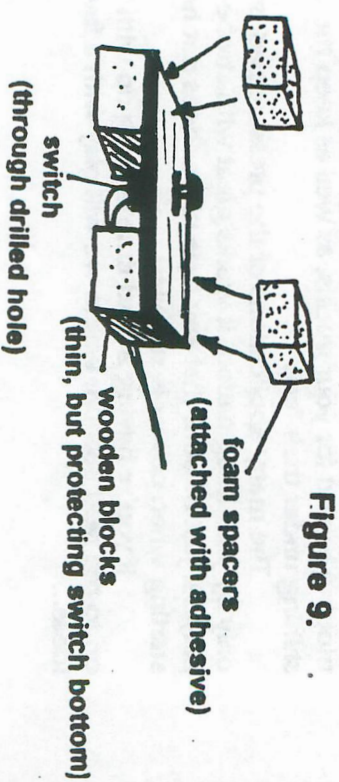


Figure 9.

As you can see, I also installed soft foam padding on top of the switch assembly. This is important. It will prevent the weight of the top piece of wood from keeping the switch on all of the time. It will act as a spring which will deactivate the unit once your victims have stepped off of it.

Secure the switch bracket unit to the bottom panel of the pressure pad unit with wood screws from the bottom and your pressure pad unit is complete!

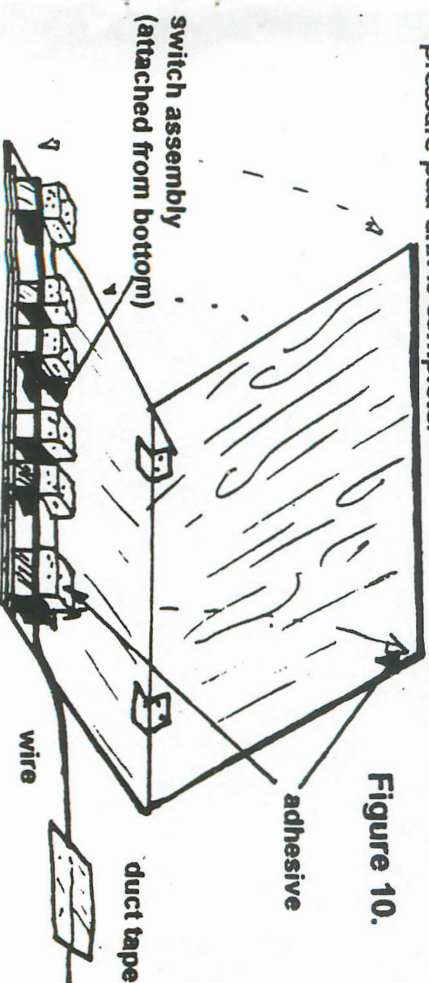


Figure 10.

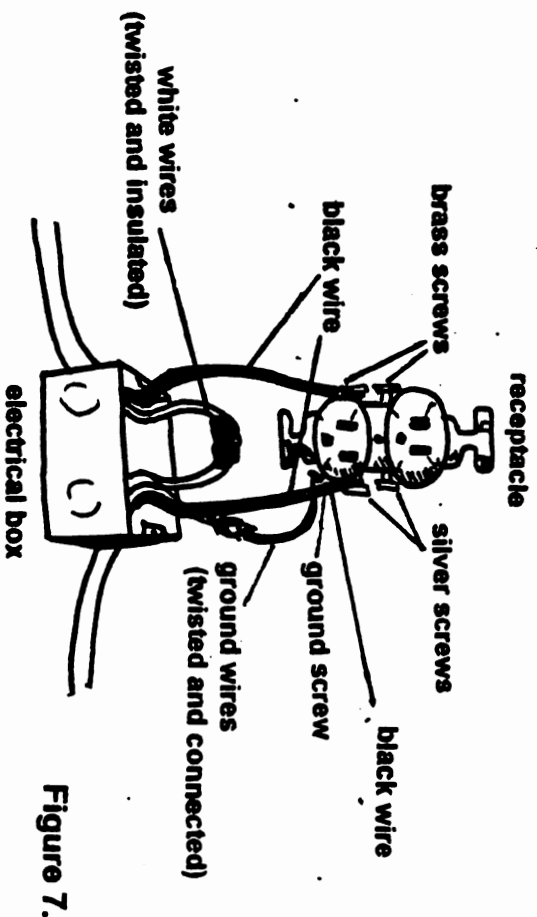


Figure 7.

You will now be left with four unconnected wires which protrude from the box. Using your pliers, twist the two white wires tightly together and wrap them tightly with electrical tape. You do not want any of the bare metal in these two wires to be exposed. Now twist the two ground wires tightly together, leaving a small piece of the bare wire extended beyond the connection. This wire will be connected to the receptacle by the ground screw which is on its lower corner.

Great! Now the receptacle unit is complete. Secure it in the small box and put the cover on. Before doing so, however, secure the wires to the box using the clamps that should have come with it.

The last step in the circuit assembly is the connection of a plug-in which will allow you to power the circuit. The plug in that you purchased should have three screws within it. As before, one should be chrome, one should be brass, and one should be green. See Figure 8. Connect the

black wire using the brass screw and the white wire using the silver screw. Connect your ground wire to the remaining screw. Now secure the cover. Cool. The Circuit is complete!

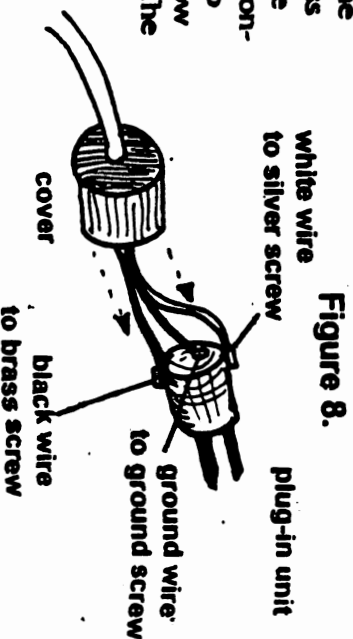


Figure 8.

Now comes the secret to the effect. Find an old

bedsheet. No, it's not time to take a nap yet. This fabric is going to form your fake door. If at all possible, get a sheet that has no patterns of any kind on it. It really does not matter what color the fabric is, but it must be *plain*. You'll thank me for this tip later.

Spread the sheet out on the floor and lay the constructed wooden frame on it as shown in Figure 2. Using a heavy duty stapler, secure the fabric to the top of the frame first, then - working your way down the sides - pull the sheet tight and secure it to the frame. The secret is to pull the fabric tight enough to not show sag when it is put in place. Do, however, leave enough slack to allow an actor to push the fabric forward from the back. If the cloth is as tight as a drum, you will have defeated your purpose.

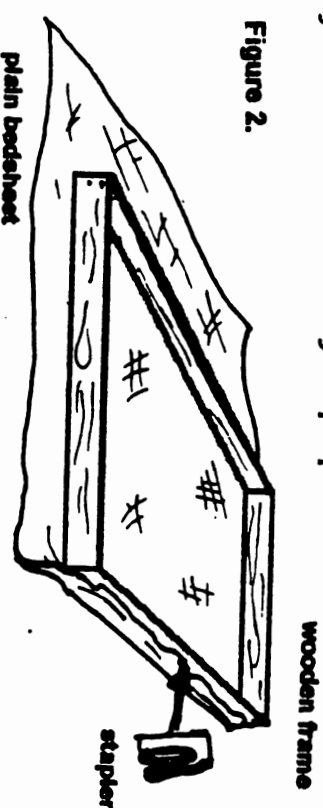


Figure 2.

Now it is time to paint the phoney door. Because the fabric is so absorbant, it would probably take about ten cans of spray paint to coat it consistently. Instead, use the good old fashioned *paint can and brush method*, making sure that the fabric is coated with a solid color. This is your base color. It should be a shade similar to wood or painted wood. A black, brown, or dark gray would do nicely.

Once the base coat of color dries and the sheet no longer looks exactly like a sheet, it is time to dress the panel up. Don't worry. For those of you who are having *spray paint withdrawals*, here's your big moment.

Using masking tape, outline door parts on the panel as shown in Figure 3. If you don't know what a door looks like, get a *life*. Keep your tape outlines straight, though. You don't want the door to look like something you fingerpainted in the

first grade. Once the masks are in place, carefully spray the areas inside them with spray paint that is a lighter shade than that which you used for your base coat.

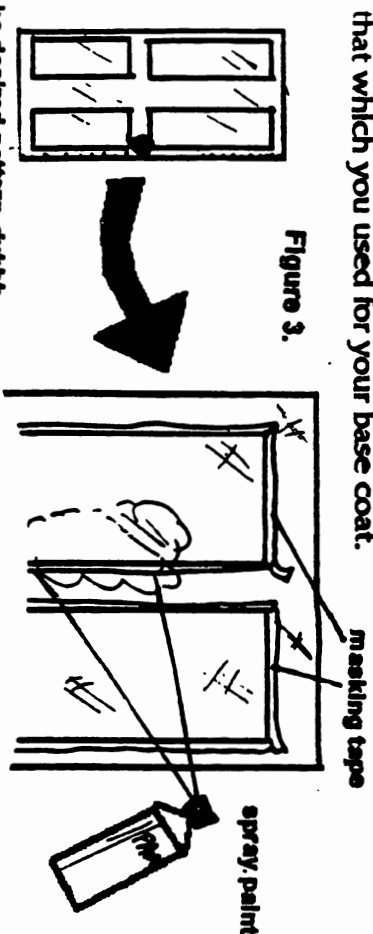


Figure 3.

the desired pattern-drawn.

Cool. After all of the paint has completely dried, secure the constructed frame to the door opening in your haunted house using more of the drywall screws. This will make it easy to remove later.

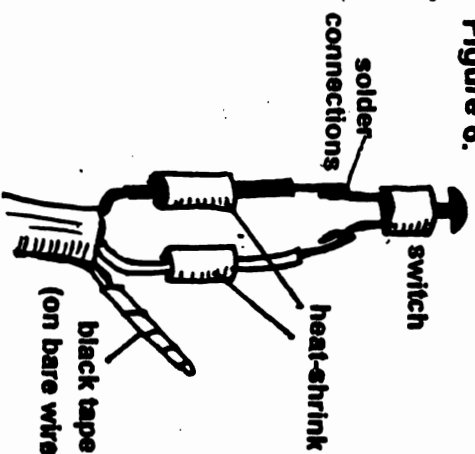
It will probably take a little bit of experimentation to get the lighting right. The light source that you use for the effect should be a dim one and should be placed at a sharp angle to the door. This way, when your actor applies pressure to the trick panel, it will cast creepy shadows. As corny as it may sound, a child's night light works nicely.

Also, you may want to experiment by pressing rigid masks into the panel - one on each hand - and moving them in eerie, circular motions.

If you can find or create a sound effect that is the combination of a low, rumbling sound and the crackling of wood, it will complete the effect. For those of you with home computers equipped with sound cards, you may have finally found something *worthwhile* to do with them...

Bend the ground wire out of the way and cover it with black electrical tape. You will not need it at the switch end of the circuit.

Figure 6.



Okay. That was simple enough. Now cut the other end of the wire the desired length from the switch. I suggest at least six feet. It will make the entire unit more versatile.

Insert the bare end of the wire through one of the holes in the electrical box (the box which will hold the receptacle unit) and strip the wires the same as before. This time, you will also strip the cover from the ground wire(green), if indeed there *is* one. Lay it aside.

Cut a second length of the electrical wire. This is the one which will allow you to plug the unit in. Strip both ends of the wire as before. Insert one end of the wire through the other hole in the electrical box. Now it is time to install the receptacle unit. (see Figure 7) As shown, the receptacle will have two screws on each of its sides, holding two separate metal plates. One of the plates will be a brass color(as well as its screws), the other will be a chrome color.

This receptacle will be *in-line* in the circuit. This simply means that it will be wired on each side with corresponding-colored wires from the two electrical cables which extend through the box. I suggest using the two black wires. Using your pliers, bend the two black wires into loops and hook them over one screw on each side of the receptacle. Tighten all four of the screws.

Now it is time to construct your electrical circuit. Take a look at Figure 4.

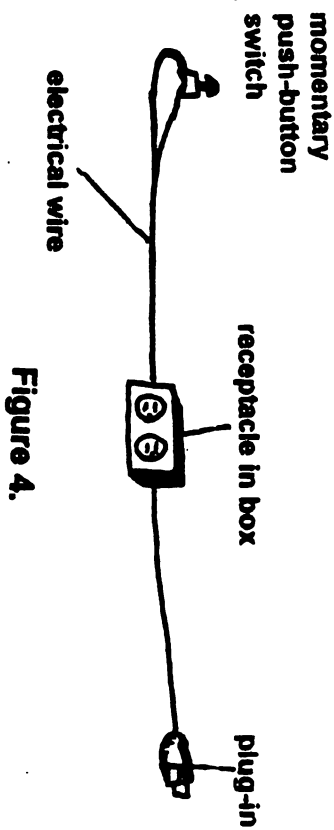


Figure 4.

For the sake of simplicity, I have avoided using the standard schematic symbols. As can be seen, the circuit simply consists of the switch, wire, a receptacle unit, and a plug-in. Simply put, when the switch is activated, current flows through the receptacle unit, turning on devices that you have set up outside of the circuit.

The actual length of the electrical wire that you use is entirely dependent on the requirements of your horror set. So before you cut any of the wire to length, make some concrete decisions on exactly where the pressure pad will be located in relation to your effect.

That said, let's prepare the end of the wire for the switch. The electrical wire that you purchased should be coated with a white or gray sheathing.

At the end of it, you will want to remove about three inches of the sheathing. Once this is done, you will have exposed the three separate wires that are contained. There should be a white or red wire, a black

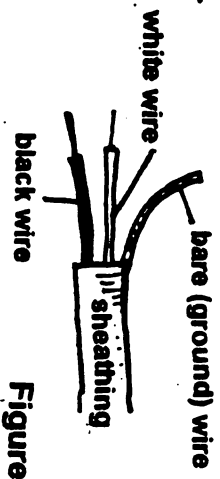


Figure 5.

wire, and a third wire which is either bare or is green. (see Figure 5) The red or white wire is your "hot" wire. The black wire is your "common" wire, and the green or bare wire is your "ground" wire.

To install the switch at the end of the wire as was shown in Figure 4, Strip the cover off of the black wire and the white wire.

THINGS THAT BLEED

Okay, you gore-lovers! This is the section for which you have all been waiting. Before we get started, I must warn you.

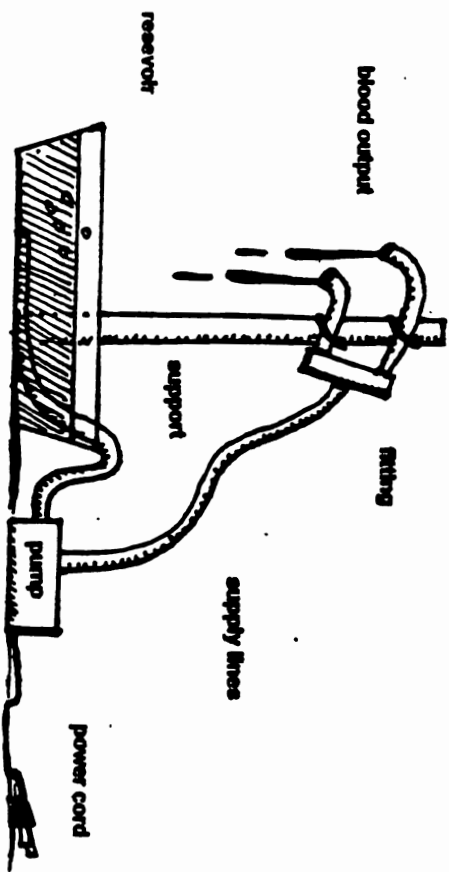
These projects can be *really messy*. While that warning will make a lot of you shiver with excitement, it is vital that you pay close attention to the tips in this section. If you are going to be working with blood, there is always the chance that you will stain fabrics. Also, anywhere that you build a display that bleeds, it will have to have a reservoir to catch the running blood. On a floor that is ordinarily smooth, just a little bit of liquid can turn a casual stroll into a *slippery slide-fest*. You do not want any of the patrons of your hall of terror to fall and hurt themselves because of a spilled puddle of blood!

In addition to these considerations, you must keep in mind that any display that will contain running blood will have to be waterproof. If you insist on building these things with paper mache or the like, expect severe damage after a few hours of running liquid.

Okay, now that I have really *petrified* you, let's get on with it.

Before we delve into the creative aspects of these projects, maybe we should familiarize ourselves with the basic components of a bleeding system. Take a look at Figure 1.

Figure 1.



As you can see, a bleeding system has three basic components:

a. *reservoir*- This is the blood supply area. There always an available supply of fake blood in this area. Also, it functions as a retrieval area for the running blood. After the liquid runs across the display, it is caught in this section.

b. *pump* - As you can probably guess, this is the heart of the system. (ha-is that a lousy play on words, or what?) It forces the fake blood to flow through the display. It helps the to 'defy gravity.'

c. *supply lines*- These are the hoses that direct the flow of the liquid. Because they will sometimes squirm and move when the pump is active, they should always be secured in place on your display.

- Electrical receptacle unit*
- Electrical box*
- Electrical and Duct tape*
- Two small utility hinges*

For tools, you will also need a set of wire strippers and cutters, needle-nosed pliers, a power saw, and an electric drill. (*The same old stuff as usual*)

The first step in constructing your pressure pad is cutting out two even-sized squares of plywood. The actual dimensions of the two pieces are not really that important and can really depend upon the location in your labyrinth at which the unit will be installed. However, for the sake of specificity, we will construct our pad to the dimensions show in Figure 2.

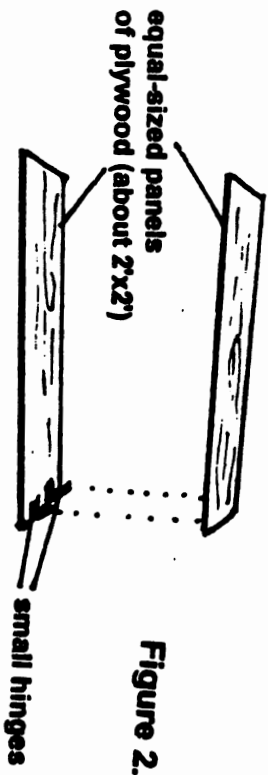


Figure 2.

Along one of the common edges of the two pieces of wood, we will attach two hinges as shown in the diagram. These hinges will connect the two pieces and create a fulcrum point at which the top plate can swing.

Figure 3.

As can be seen in Figure 3, this will allow one of your visitors to walk up onto the pad without being aware of its presence. It will be like a ramp in the direction of his travel.



3. All connections should be soldered or twisted firmly.

One of the best ways to avoid having a problem with an electrical circuit is to make sure that all connections are firm and solid. Before plugging a circuit in, you should give every one of your connections the pull test. If you can easily pull the connection apart, you need to redo it in such a way that you know that it will not come apart.

4. Secure all cables. The wires going to and from the

pressure pad- as well as any other wire that is in the pathway of your guests- should be secured in such a way that you feel confident that it will *not* be a *tripping hazard*. If a wire is looped above floor level and is loose, your guests can trip over it and pull its connections apart. This is *not acceptable*. Anywhere that a wire will run, it should be secured to the floor using gaffer's(duck) tape.

Okay, Hopefully, all of those warnings did not intimidate you. I mean, contrary to what you may think after reading them, building my pressure pad is easy. If you follow the rules above, you should not have any problem wiring the device as well as what ever display you have connected to it.

So much for all of those formalities. Here is a list of what you will need to construct the *Brains pressure pad*:

*normally open, momentary
push-button switches, rated at
250 Volts each.*

Plywood

scrap wood blocks

Electrical wire, also rated at at least 250V

Shrinkable Tubing

Solder and Soldering Iron

packing foam or sponge material

It is important to note that once the running blood reaches the ends of the supply lines and runs over the constructed display, it is at the mercy of gravity. Therefore, the reservoir should be set up in such a way that it catches the liquid once it has crossed.

Depending upon what you choose to use as a reservoir, the running liquid could spatter and make a mess as it returns. Also, it could make an annoying an distracting sound. Just thought that I'd mention it. All bleeding displays should be thoroughly tested outdoors before being set up in a haunted house. That way you can see exactly how it is going to behave before it causes any serious damage to anything in your haunted house. Let's look at a couple of simple projects. Once you get a general feel for what you are doing, you are limited only by your imagination.

There are many different kinds of hydraulic pumps on the market. Don't let the term intimidate you. There are small pumps available by mail order from companies such as Edlund Scientific. Also, the local big-chain hardware stores sell small pumps that are used in garden displays. You can even buy a pump at your local hobby store(they are used in miniature displays such as model train setups)

One more unique idea that way relayed to me by Richard Shields of Richmond, IN. He said that he used an automotive fuel pump(available at any auto parts store) powered by a car battery charger. You are on your own if you try that one, but it sounded like a really good idea.

The supply lines that you use are really dependent on the size and type of pump that you use. Once you have chosen your pump, *hoses and fittings* of all types are available at your local hardware store or hobby store. Ask the *helpful hardware man* for help if you need it.

Here are a couple of projects to get you started. After that, you are limited only by your imagination(and your technical prowess)

The Bleeding Corpse

I'm not going to spend a lot of time on corpse construction at this point. Let's face it-I've covered that concept *ad nauseum* in the other books. I suggest that you refresh your memory on working with fiberglass by referring back to **HHH3**. Contrary to what I said before, you can build a papier mache corpse for this project. If you do, however, I would suggest that you use a more diligent painting regimen than the one outlined in the first **HHH**. Because of the risk of damage due to moisture, a papier mache corpse needs to be thoroughly *primed* before painting and painted with a *good exterior grade of house paint*. This will help to stave off the risk of damage by moisture.

It is best, however, to construct a fiberglass corpse.

Unlike the corpse built in **HHH3**, however, this cadaver needs to first have a frame constructed which can withstand oscillations caused by the running pump. Take a look at

Figure 2 for a basic rundown of the effect.

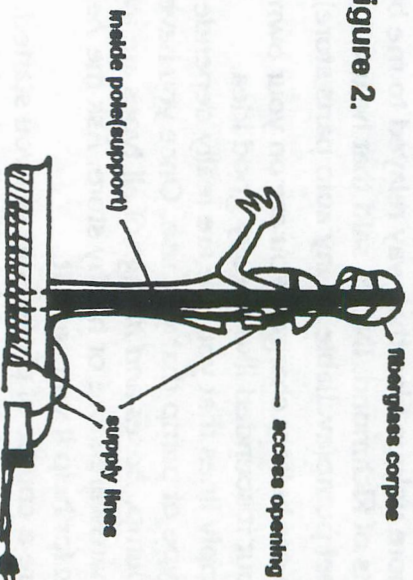


Figure 2.

As you can see, the corpse is suspended by a vertical pole which is quite solid. This will keep him from shaking his supply lines loose while operating. Note also that I left an

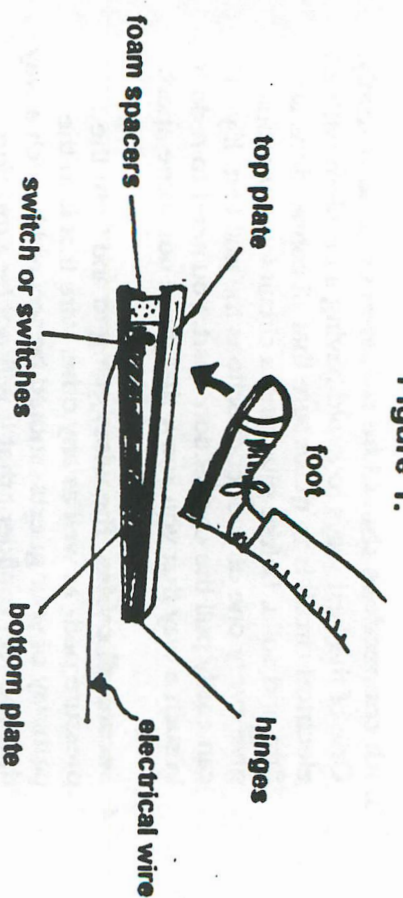


Figure 1.

The switches underneath the top panel are momentary push-button switches, and their activation causes an exterior device (a strobe light, tape player, etc.) to come on. This means that when one of your customers turns a dark corner and inadvertently steps on the pad, a flashing, screaming display can become active, scaring the "%%&%%" out of them!

I will tell you right now that if you know nothing about electricity and electrical circuits, you may want to enlist the aid of someone who does. I, personally, have a degree in electronics, so I simply take it for granted that my readers have a nominal amount of knowledge on the subject. If you do not, it is important that you follow every step to the letter. Otherwise, you could have a disaster on your hands. There are certain precautions that you should take when working with electricity:

1. **Never work on an electrical circuit that is active.** Any time you find it necessary to modify or repair any electrical circuit, *disconnect it*. When I say disconnect it, I mean shut it off **and UNPLUG IT**. Sometimes it is easy to assume that a circuit has no dangerous current flowing through it just because the switch is off. This is *foolish and dangerous*. **Always unplug any circuit before working on it.**

2. **Watch out for bare wires.** Anywhere that you can see the metal of wires is a place that should be isolated, sealed, or insulated. Metal, as you should know, is a conductor. Any bare metal wires that you can see in your circuit are points of potential danger. Any connection point in your circuit should be insulated with electrical tape in order to prevent shock or fire hazards.

The Pressure Pad

Sometimes it is necessary to have automated special effects and displays. It is just too impractical - and not very cost-effective - to have one of your crewmembers do nothing more than man a switch and wait for your guests to get into position. Instead, you are better off having some kind of device that recognizes the presence of your visitors and turns on the appropriate equipment accordingly.

Think about it. Wouldn't you much rather have that valuable crew member doing something more *productive*? You know...like scaling the *b/lc* out of one of your patrons. Don't be intimidated by the concept of automation. We live in technologically advanced times! It is really easy to get your hands on everything you need to put together a unit that detects the presence of victims and terrifies them when they are least expecting it!

My favorite device for accomplishing this feat is a pressure pad. You know the kind of thing about which I speak. If you have ever entered an office or shop and stepped on a mat which rang a doorbell, you have used a pressure pad. You can probably acquire one at a nominal cost from an electronics or security supplier, but I set out on a quest to create one of my own, and this section is the result of that quest.

My pressure pad consists of two panels of wood. When someone steps on the top panel, it presses it toward the bottom one, activating a couple of switches. Each of these switches can be used to activate a separate device that is wired to the unit. A general description of how the pressure pad works is in Figure 1.

open panel in the back of the display. It would be foolish to construct a statue out of a material as strong as fiberglass without leaving an access opening for any emergency repairs that might crop up. This kind of effect can sometimes be unpredictable.

For my corpse, I needed a good solid reservoir of blood in which he could stand. The trough underneath him was actually a cement mixing pan. They are available at most big name hardware suppliers. They are made of some kind of hard plastic and are lightweight, yet sturdy. I weighted down the base of the prop to keep it from tilting over and spilling the red liquid using a couple of concrete blocks.

In the insect picture you can see that the pump supply lines are secured to the supporting pole using cable ties. Any sort of wire or clamp will do, but you want to avoid crimping or mashing the lines. Also be sure not to puncture them. This effect is messy enough without any unscheduled surprises.

I would suggest getting all of your hoses in place and testing them before applying the fiberglass mat to the chicken wire frame. That way you can be sure they work and you don't have to break out a powersaw after the fiberglass has set to do modifications. Also, by testing the system (outdoors, please, to start), you can see if any unacceptable spattering will occur when the device is in operation. Of course, the contours of your corpse are going to effect how the liquid will flow, so maybe we should talk about that a little bit. Take a look at Figure 3.

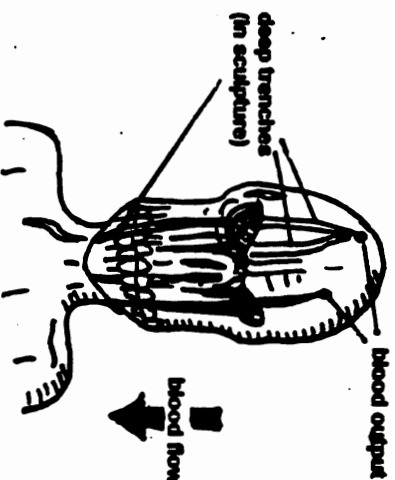


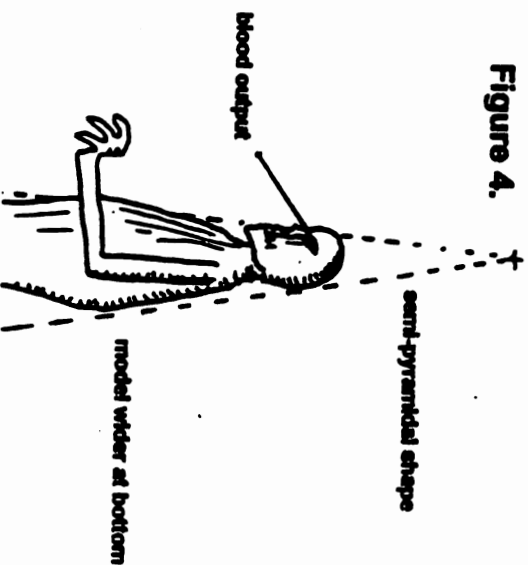
Figure 3.

Of course, it is sometimes difficult to predict how liquids will flow. You would think that predicting the effects of gravity would be something that could be mastered by a kindergarten, but the simplest things we encounter can sometimes be the most complex and unpredictable. Let's be perfectly frank. Even the most accomplished physicists have been unable to tell us what gravity even is!

But there are a few things that you can do to help the fake blood flow in a direction that is generally what you desire. As shown in the drawing, you can sculpt the equivalent of riverbeds in the face of the zombie. With vertical trenches on the surface of your constructed prop, you can - to a certain extent - control the direction of the flowing gore.

A good precaution that you can take is to construct your prop using pyramidal design. That is, your construction should protrude further on the bottom portion than it does in the top portion.

Figure 4.



See Figure 4. As you can see, the model is basically shaped using imaginary lines which resemble the shape of a roof. By keeping this concept in mind, you can avoid displays that spatter uncontrollably. With a shape like this, the blood will run across the surface of the display instead of dripping at the top and falling a long distance to the reservoir below. That is what causes unnecessary spatter.

Another thing that can effect the outcome of your display is the force of the pump that you use. If your pump is too powerful, the blood could spray out of the holes at the top instead of just smoothly flowing out. If the pump is too weak, you could end up with a lackluster display.

The Bleeding Wall

Making a wall that bleeds is probably not as complicated as the corpse we just discussed. The most difficult portion of the project is probably the acquisition or

using the box as window dressing as I did. (See Figure 7.)

Is that neat or what?

If you constructed your box properly, and you have installed the appropriate strand of lights, the front of the display should have an everchanging, eerie pattern of glowing eyes. Almost *psychodelic*.

As I stated near the beginning of the section, you can modify the dimensions of the box and the placement of the lights to create even more stunning effects.

Though I have not tried it yet, I am contemplating constructing a box that is the size of a door frame and putting a set of tracer lights in its back in a figure eight pattern. Then, a larger cutout of a floating apparition will appear to hover in circles beyond the door. Experiment with the effect and let me know, because I haven't yet done so. I am not sure of what pitfalls may be encountered on such a large project. I may be just satisfied to just sit back and enjoy the original *Box of Goblins* that I created. I have not yet grown tired of looking at it...

fits tightly enough to avoid breakage as the box is moved around. Now attach the front of the lid to the box, aligning its front and rear edges with the other panels of the box and the edge of the track, respectively. (Figure 6)

Don't yet

Figure 6

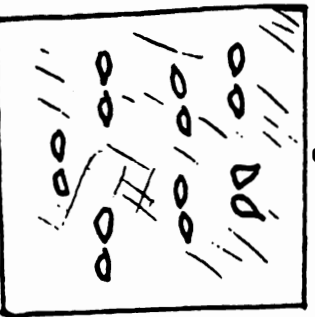


The size of the holes that you drill with the hole-

cutter bit really depends on the size of the lights that you are using. Like I said before, the images on the goblin screen will most likely look like dim and indistinguishable clouds if you use the tiny, conservative Christmas bulbs. You want the big gaudy ones that are much like the kind that have been sleeping in your attic for the last twenty years.

The pattern you choose in placing the lights is up to you, too. I personally installed my bulbs in neat rows and columns. It really depends on the *behaviour of the light strand you are using*. Hopefully, only sections of the strand light up at a time. Otherwise, your project will be a failure. (Don't you like the positive thinking?)

Figure 7



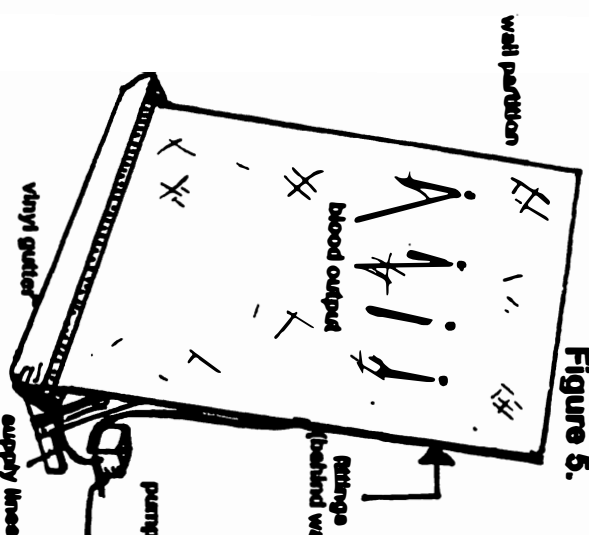
Once your lights are

installed, screw the last wooden panel onto the box and it is complete. To experiment with the box, cut out a piece of cardboard the same dimensions as the glass panel. Into it, cut your goblin shapes. Your imagination is the limit, but I think that several sets of eyes work nicely, especially if you are planning on

creation of a reservoir to catch the blood. I have found that the most viable alternative to letting your blood flow freely is to purchase a house gutter from your local home improvement store. Depending on the length of the bloody wall partition you plan, a vinyl house gutter can cost around ten dollars.

I won't bore you to tears by describing yet again the construction of a wall panel. You should have mastered that long ago. But if you want to refresh your memory, look back at HHH1 or HHH2. This time around, however, you want to modify that original design to allow for a slope across the front of the panel. See Figure 5.

Figure 5.



The side view of the wall shows the slight vertical slant. Between ten and fifteen degrees should do it. Any more and your wall could become a raging waterfall...or should I say *bloodfall*. At this slight angle, your guests will probably not notice the slant of the surface. More importantly, they will not come running out of your haunted house looking like a bunch of gunshot victims. I mean, sure, you can use all of the hype you can generate, but please don't

do it at the expense of your guests' clothing. (And that concludes our lesson in kindness for today)

If you still have the plaster moulds you created for the *Hall of Heads* display in HHH2, you may want to risk their longevity by making fiberglass masks like in HHH3. Gee, I'm beginning to sound like a broken record when it comes to referring back to other books. Sorry. You'll just have to bear with me. I'm trying to save space for all of the *new stuff*

Of course, building a bleeding wall will require a lot more plastic or rubber tubing for the supply lines. More fittings, too. So test your setup before you start stringing

hoses all over the place. You want to make sure that the pump that you are using is powerful enough to move that much blood.

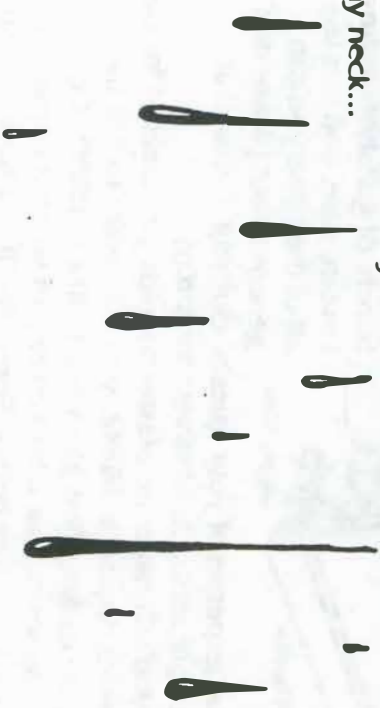
This brings me to the final bit of this section. That's right...you guessed it...

Blood

In the past, we've talked about fake blood. The Karo syrup and food coloring makes a great stage blood, but its thickness can cause some real headaches for you and your little electric pump. I suggest sticking with a water-based recipe. Mix water and food coloring. You can use Kool-Ade if you like, just remember that you don't want your bleeding corpse or wall to smell like a truckload of cherries or strawberries. If you do use this route, however, *be sure to leave the sugar out of the recipe*. It makes a sticky mess.

To thicken your fake blood slightly, you may want to add some glycerine (available at your local pharmacy or grocer). Just don't use too much.

Blood, a flowing, almost living substance can really add a bit of murkiness to your hall of horrors. Ouch! Get away from my neck...



held in place by another piece of frame. You want the box to be assembled in such a way that the last two steps in assembly will be inserting the glass and closing the lid.

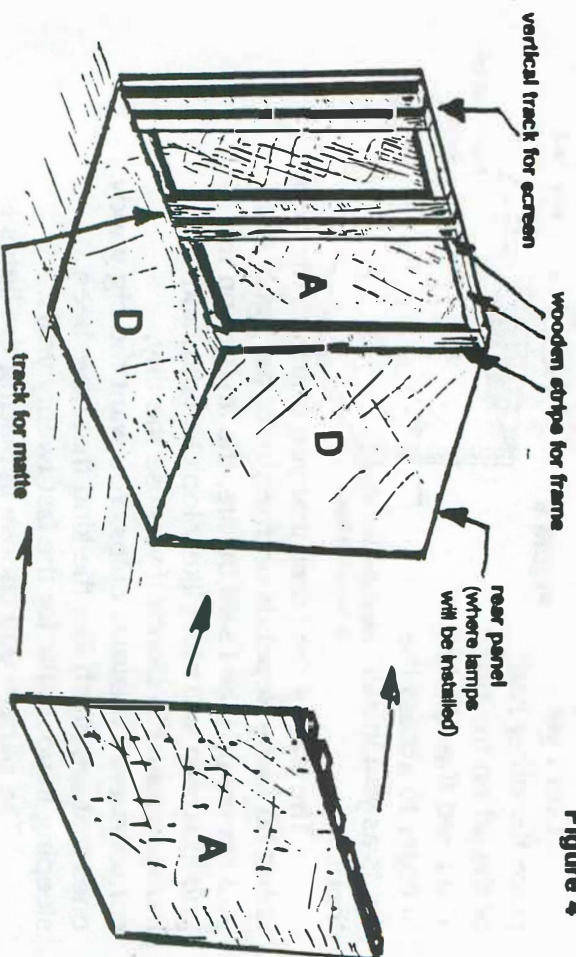


Figure 4

Figure 4 also shows the proper locations for the wooden 'tracks' into which the glass screen - as well as the cardboard matting - will be inserted.

Once the bottom three sides of the box are in place, attach the back of the box with more of the wood screws. Now it's time to paint (See **Figure 5**). There should be two pieces of the plywood left over from the original set of cutouts. Don't worry-you have not *forgotten* anything. These two pieces will form the top to the box and at this time, you need to paint them, too.

All right! Your box is very close to completion, but not quite...

Insert the goblin screen into the track that you constructed in the open side of the box. Hopefully, it

peculiar dimensions of the wood panels. If you choose to use the frosted glass as I did, it is best to go to your local home

Figure 3.



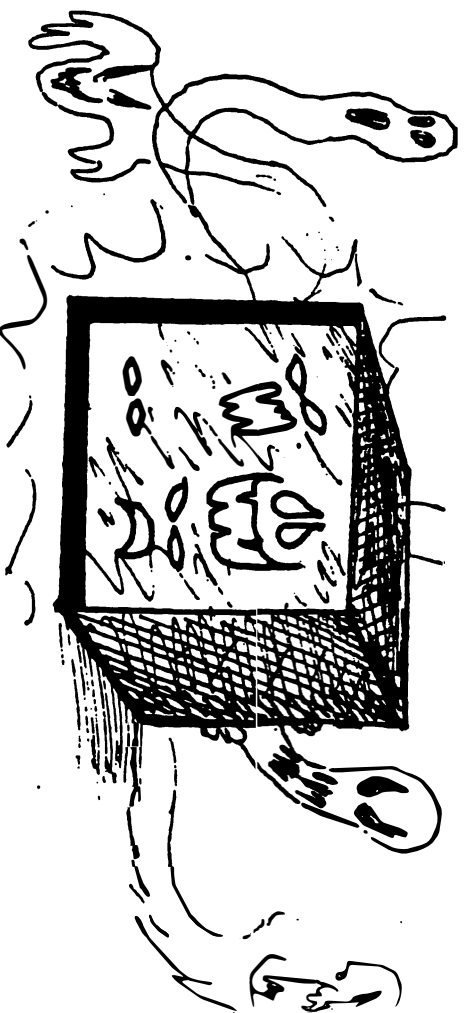
plexiglass piece
(cut 20"x20")

improvement store and get someone with the right equipment to cut it for you. If you to use plexiglass, you can cut it yourself. To do so, measure and mark the plexiglass with a dry erase marker. Score the sheet deeply with a razor knife and carefully snap it apart on the opposite side. If you have ever seen anyone cut drywall for housing installation, the theory is the same. Believe me, you do not want to attempt to saw the material. It shatters quite easily. If you do use this process, **BE SURE TO USE SAFETY GLASSES!!!**

All right. To hold the box together, cut the 1X2 inch pieces of stripping to dimensions as shown. These will be screwed to the inside of the box's panels to hold it together. They form the 'framework.'

Assemble the box as shown in Figure 4. The first step, of course, is to attach the frame pieces to the opposite sides of the box using wood screws. Note that on the front side of the box, the pieces do not completely reach the front of the box panels. This is because the goblin screen will rest against it and will be

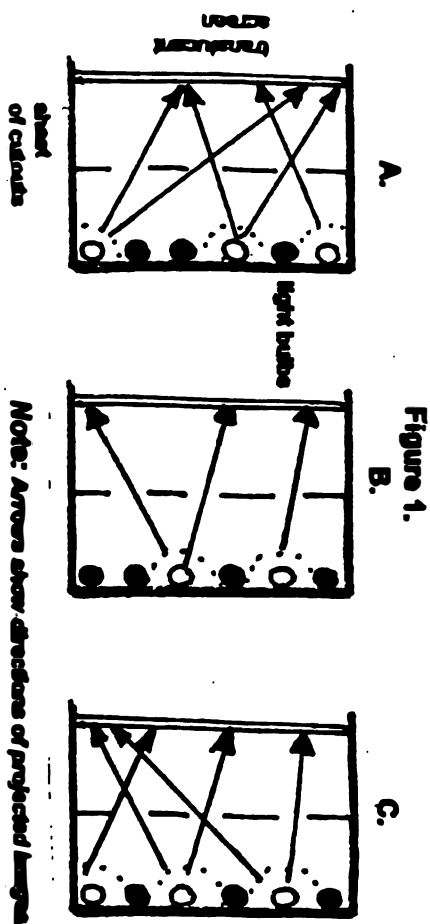
The Box of Goblins



Lighting effects always add an air of professionalism to any haunted house. In the past, we've discussed several different projects of this nature. This time around, we're going to discuss a lighting effect that is a bit different from the others. Like the *Specter Projector*, it is a self-contained unit. But depending on your ingenuity and imagination, it can be a simple effect or a very complex one. Blah, blah, blah. Enough of that *cliche* 'intro. Let's build a *Box of Goblins*. I'll go through the steps as succinctly as possible. Hell, I'm never going to be able to staple this book together.

The Box of Goblins is a throwback to the old hippie days. I can't take credit for its invention, but I gave it a really cool name, didn't I? The device is a wooden box which has a translucent screen its face. On its rear end is an array of Christmas lights. I'm not talking about the little twinkles you put on the tree in your living room. I'm talking about the larger, flame-shaped lights that people use to decorate the outdoors. Between the light array and the front screen is a cardboard matte which contains creepy cutouts. (We'll discuss that later)

Take a look at Figure 1 for a basic rundown.



As you can see, when different portions of the light strand light up, they illuminate the cutouts at different angles. The result is a seemingly ever-changing array of glowing gremlins. This may really seem cheezy to you, but the display is creepy, hypnotic, and a wee bit psychodelic. I have used my Box of Goblins as window dressing for my haunted house. With eye-shaped cutouts in the cardboard matte, the device gave the dark window the illusion of being haunted by a phantasm. It was a big hit.

Here is a list of the things that you will need to construct the box:

Plywood pieces (for the box panels)

1 x 2 pine furring strips (boards, silly)

20' x 20' piece of frosted glass or plexiglass

Short strand of large Christmas lights

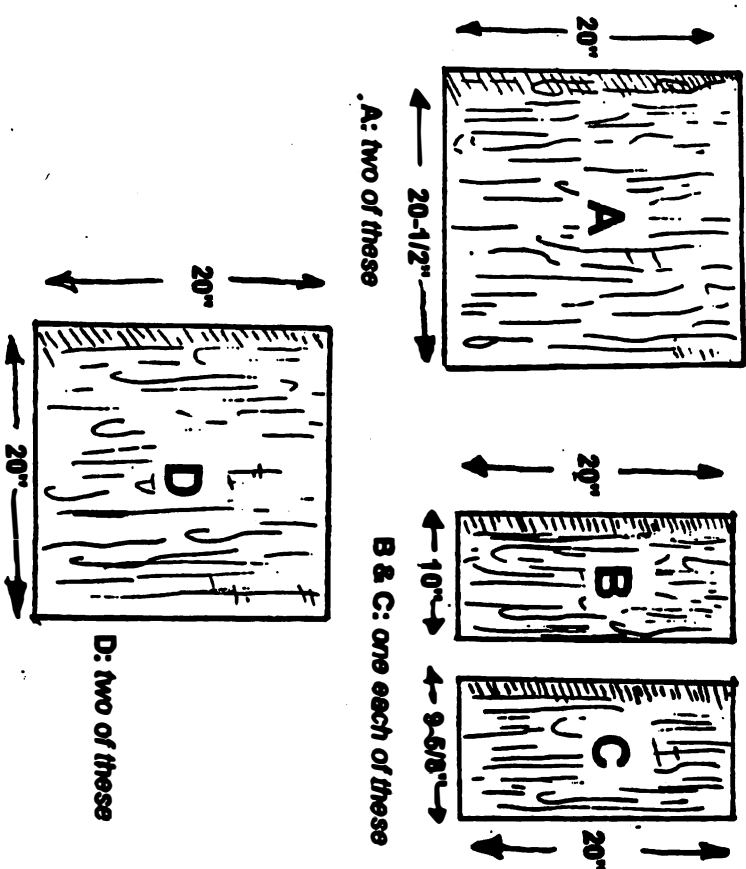
Wood screws

Black spray paint

Oh, and for tools, you'll need a power saw (circular or saber) and a drill equipped with a hole cutter and a screwdriver bit. The size of the hole cutter depends on the size of the shanks on the light bulbs, as you will see.

First of all, you need to create the box, of course. I hope that you have the patience to read the entire section before you break out the tools, though. Near the end, we will discuss some different applications of the box, so you may want to modify some of these dimensions. My window box was constructed of the dimensions below:

Plywood Dimensions



The front face of the box will be made of a frosted glass or plexiglass panel. Its placement in the box-as you will see-is the reason for the seemingly